



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Tiffany Ward
Director and Chief Equity Officer

MEMORANDUM

April 12, 2023

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #23-98
School-Based Health and Linkages to Learning Centers

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #23-98 *School-Based Health and Linkages to Learning Centers* (\$850,000) is likely to advance racial equity and social justice as the construction of a full Linkages to Learning (LTL) site at Greencastle Elementary School will expand targeted student and family-wellbeing services and help prevent racial disparities in childhood poverty and education outcomes from widening.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #23-98 School-Based Health and Linkages to Learning Centers (\$850,000) is to convert the existing partial Linkages to Learning (LTL) program at Greencastle Elementary School to a full LTL site. This supplemental appropriation is proposed now to take advantage of ongoing construction at the school.

To assess the extent to which this supplemental appropriation will advance racial equity and social justice in the County, we looked at information about the LTL program and how it relates to racial disparities and inequities in educational opportunity and outcomes. We then looked at how the construction of a full LTL site at Greencastle Elementary School might affect students and families and whether those effects could help to reduce racial disparities and inequities in child poverty, graduation rates, and school discipline (among other health and education outcomes).

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LTL is a 30-year-old¹ community school partnership with an integrated focus on health, social services, community engagement, and leadership to support student learning, strong families, and healthy communities². LTL currently supports 31 school communities in the County³. According to its logic model, the program seeks a range of short-term and long-term outcomes:

Service Area	Short-term Outcomes	Long-term Outcomes
Student Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved attendance • Improved classroom behavior • Reduced disciplinary referrals • Increased positive feelings of well-being and belonging in school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students attend school consistently • Students are actively involved in learning and in the school community
Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families have increased ability to provide for basic needs • Families have increased engagement in students' education at home • Families attend school-wide events and conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are actively involved in school • Families are actively involved in children's education
Community Education & Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students feel they belong in school • Schools are open to community • Families participate in decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are actively involved in the community • Schools are engaged with families and communities

Source: <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/community-engagement/linkages-to-learning/Linkages-Logic-Model-Edited-04-18-17.pdf>

The most recent evaluation report available online is from 2016 (reflecting data from the 2013-2014 school year) and highlights the strengths of LTL on ratings of student self-concept⁴ and school attendance. The report also noted progress on measures of self-sufficiency among participating families. However, persistent structural and systemic inequities make areas of employment, income management, and adult literacy difficult to

¹ <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/community-engagement/linkages-to-learning/aboutus.aspx>

² <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/community-engagement/linkages-to-learning/>

³ <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/community-engagement/linkages-to-learning/>

⁴ "Self-concept" refers to The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, which is a nationally normed measure of children's (age 7 to 18 years) psychological health. <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/community-engagement/linkages-to-learning/2016%20LTL%20Report.pdf>

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impact more than a third of the family members were still at risk or in crisis in these areas after LTL participation⁵.

Overall, the evaluation report provides a strong basis for continued expansion and innovation in LTL. Notably, findings in the report were not disaggregated by race and ethnicity, and in looking specifically at case management (table 14), it appears that more than half of participating family members who received case management were White; this data point is inconsistent with other measures—it is difficult to determine why this may be but is worth noting for future evaluations.

Based on available information, The Greencastle location is the only LTL serving East County⁶. There is often a waiting list for LTL at Greencastle Elementary School and the Principal has requested a full site to help meet this need. According to the most recent MCPS At-A-Glance report for 2021-2022, the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Greencastle students are as follows:

Race/Ethnicity + Service Group	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian	Black	Latino/Hispanic	White	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	Two plus races	Emergent English Learner	Receive Free and Reduced-Price Meals (FARMs)	Special Education
% of Greencastle Students	<5%	7.3%	65.9%	21.7%	<5%	<5%	<5%	16.6%	68.7%	17.4%

Source:

<https://ww2.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/regulatoryaccountability/glance/current-year/schools/02334.pdf>

Racial disparities and inequities in educational opportunity and achievement disproportionately affect Black Indigenous and Other People of Color (BIPOC) and low-income students in Montgomery County. ORESJ has written about these inequities in several previous REIAs⁷. Of particular relevance to this supplemental appropriation is

⁵ <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/community-engagement/linkages-to-learning/2016%20LTL%20Report.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedImages/community-engagement/linkages-to-learning/LTLMap.png>

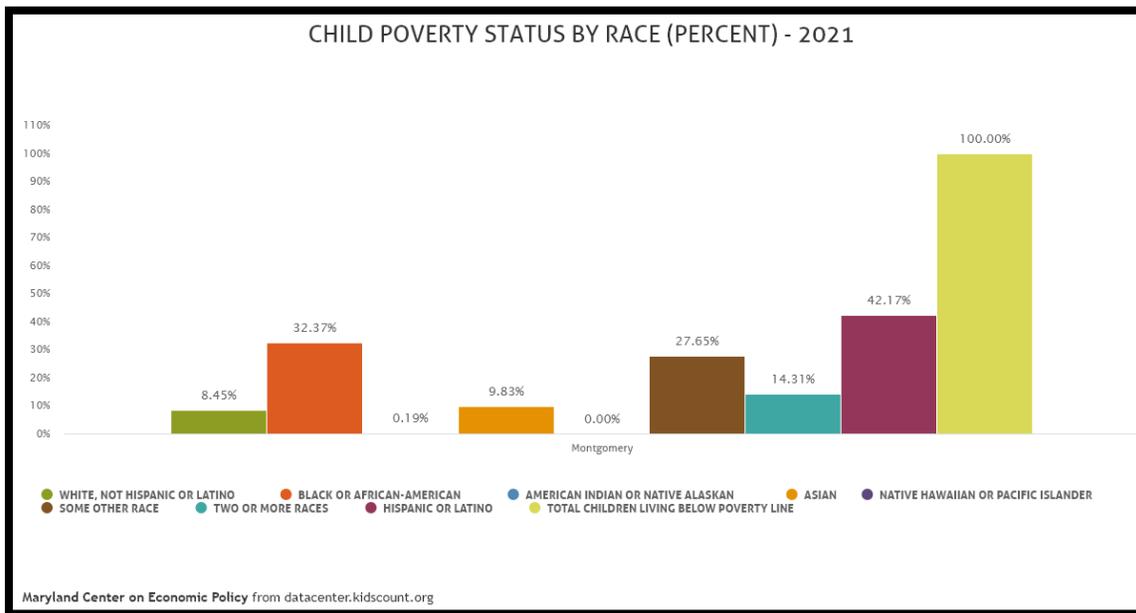
⁷ REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-15 MCPS Summer School Learning Grant <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-15.pdf>; REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-64 Newcomer Enhancements <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-64.pdf>; REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-93 MCPS Title 1, Part A Grant <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-93.pdf>

data related to disparities in child poverty, graduation rates, and school discipline. *See the data analysis section.*

Given the demographic and socioeconomic makeup of Greencastle Elementary School and what is known about racial disparities and inequities shaping educational opportunity and achievement in the County, it is likely that many of the students and families attending Greencastle would benefit from a full LTL site. Further, as mentioned in a 2016 program evaluation, “the development of a child is affected by a range of proximal and distal influences and contexts, and multiple influences can be leveraged to enhance the development of a child or adolescent over time”⁸. In an LTL school setting, many of these “influences” are simultaneously addressed helping to counter the systemic forces that interfere with academic success. The presence of an expanded site would help to reach more students and families with targeted services that enable student-wellbeing and contribute to the reduction of gaps in child poverty, graduation, and school discipline rates.

III. **DATA ANALYSIS:** The below charts and tables illustrate racial disparities in childhood poverty, graduation, and school discipline in Montgomery County. All these indicators are relevant to the types of targeted services offered through LTL.

Child poverty, Montgomery County, MD, 2021



Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org
<https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bar/8538-child-poverty-status-by->

⁸ <https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/community-engagement/linkages-to-learning/2016%20LTL%20Report.pdf>

[race?loc=22&loct=5#5/3315/false/2048/4406,3303,3304,2161,3305,3306,3307,3301,4551/17226](#)

Graduation rates by race and ethnicity, Montgomery County, MD Class of 2022

Race/Ethnicity	% of Class of 2022 that graduated
Black or African American	90.8%
American Indian or Native Alaskan	90%
Asian	> 95% data suppressed
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	> 95% data suppressed
Two or More Races	93.2%
White	> 95% data suppressed
Hispanic or Latino of any race	80.4%

Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, [datacenter.kidscount.org https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/8956-graduation-rates-4-year-adjusted-cohort?loc=22&loct=5#detailed/5/3315/false/2546/4406,3303,3304,2161,3305,3307,3301,2160,5613/17898,17899](https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/8956-graduation-rates-4-year-adjusted-cohort?loc=22&loct=5#detailed/5/3315/false/2546/4406,3303,3304,2161,3305,3307,3301,2160,5613/17898,17899)

Suspension population (pre-k to 12th grade), Montgomery County, MD 2018-2019*

Race/Ethnicity	% of total suspensions in the County
Black or African American	43.5%
American Indian or Native Alaskan	0.0%
Asian	4.2%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.0%
Two or More Races	4.1%
White	12.0%
Hispanic or Latino	36.2%

*Last full year of in-person instruction before the COVID-19 pandemic and virtual learning.

Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, [datacenter.kidscount.org https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/8502-suspension-population?loc=22&loct=5#detailed/5/3315/false/1696/2160,3303,3304,2161,3305,3307,2157/17158,17159](https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/8502-suspension-population?loc=22&loct=5#detailed/5/3315/false/1696/2160,3303,3304,2161,3305,3307,2157/17158,17159)

cc: Dr. James Bridgers, Acting Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Ken Hartman, Director, Strategic Partnerships, Office of the County Executive